BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images may include (but are not limited to):

- BLACK BORDERS
- TEXT CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES
- FADED TEXT
- ILLEGIBLE TEXT
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES
- COLORED PHOTOS
- BLACK OR VERY BLACK AND WHITE DARK PHOTOS
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS

IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

As rescanning documents *will not* correct images, please do not report the images to the Image Problem Mailbox.

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Original) A method for continuously preparing a silicon oxide powder, comprising the steps of:

feeding a raw material powder mixture containing silicon dioxide powder into a reaction furnace,

heating the mixture in the furnace in an inert gas or in vacuum to a temperature of 1,100 to 1,600°C to produce a silicon oxide gas,

introducing the silicon oxide gas into a cooling chamber through a transfer conduit which is maintained at a temperature of from higher than 1,000°C to 1,300°C, thereby causing silicon oxide to deposit on a surface of a substrate which is disposed and cooled in the cooling chamber, and

continuously recovering the silicon oxide deposit.

Claim 2 (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the raw material powder mixture is a mixture comprised of a silicon dioxide powder and a metal silicon powder.

Claim 3 (Cancelled)

Claim 4 (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the raw material powder mixture is a mixture comprised of a silicon dioxide powder and a reducing powder therefor.

Claim 5 (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the raw material powder mixture is a mixture comprised of a silicon dioxide powder and a carbon-containing powder.

Claim 6 (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein heating the mixture in the furnace is to a temperature of 1,200 to 1,500°C.

Claim 7 (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein when heating the mixture in the furnace, the furnace is under vacuum

Claim 8 (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the transfer conduit is maintained at 1,100 to 1,200°C.

Claim 9 (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is cooled to 200 to 500°C.

Claim 10 (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is cooled to 300 to 400°C.

Claim 11 (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein recovering the silicon oxide deposit is performed by a scraper.